

## [Mrs. Mary E. Burleson]

Edith L. Crawford

Carrizozo, N. Mex.

1090-words. PIONEER STORY.

By Mrs. Mary E. Burleson.

The Government train we came to New Mexico in had about one hundred prairie schooners in it. Of this number four belonged to my family. My grandfather and grandmother Searcy, with six girls and one boy and my father, O. K. Chittenden, with my mother brother Tom and myself. I was five years old and my brother was about one year old. My grandfather and my father sold their farms in West Fort, Missouri. We brought all our supplies along with us. We had our flour in barrels, our own meat, lard and sugar. We were not allowed to stop and hunt buffalo on the way out here on account of the Indians. The women made the bread out of sour dough and used Soda. There was no such thing as baking powder in tho'se days. The men baked the bread in dutch ovens over the camp fires. When we stopped at night the schooners with families were put into a circle and the Government schooners would form a circle around the family wagons. In between the two circles they put the oxen and horses, to keep the Indians from getting them. Every night the men took turns standing guard. All the soldiers rode horses. Every few days the train would stop and everybody would get rested. The feet of the oxen would get so sore that they could not go witho'ut resting them every few days. When the train stopped it was nearly always at water and the women would do their washing. The train used cow and buffalo chips and anything they could find to burn. The men did all this as the women and children were never allowed far from 2 the schooners on account of Indians. We did not milk our cow as she had to be worked along with the oxen. Our schooners had cow hides

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fastened underneath and our cooking utensils were packed in them. Our drinking water was carried in barrels tied to the sides of the schooners. [? ?/5/41???

We had no trouble of any kind on our trip but we were always in fear of the Indians as other trains had been attacked by them. Mr. Tom Boggs, the foreman of the Government train, told us that there was a band of Indians just ahead of our train. The Indians had attacked a train not long before we came along and had killed the people, stolen the horses and cattle and burned the wagons. We saw what was left of the wagons as we passed by.

We left the wagon train on Raton Pass. Enoch Tipton who was a relative of my grandmother, and who had persuaded my grandfather and father to come out to this country, met us on Raton Pass. We stopped at his place at Tiptonville, New Mexico. Enoch Tipton had come out here sometime before from West Port, Missouri. I do not remember just when he came or how he happened to settle here. Tiptonville is the same place as Mora, New Mexico is now. My father and grandfather farmed a year at Tiptonville. When we found our new home hard dirt floors and a dirt roof my mother was so very homesick to go back to Missouri where we had a nice farm home. My mother had brought her spinning wheel with her. She spun all the yarn for our clothes and knitted all our socks and stockings. My father and grandfather made a loom for her and [she?] made us two carpets for our floors to keep the baby from getting so 3 awful dirty on the floor. We had brought some seed cane with us and my father and grandfather made a homemade syrup mill and made syrup, the first ever made in that country. The mill was a crude affair made of logs and drawn by a horse. The juice was pressed out with the logs and put in a vat and cooked into syrup. People came from miles around to see this mill.

We always saved all our beef and mutton tallow to make our candles. We brought our moulds from Missouri with us. We made our wicks out of cotton strings. We tied a large knot in the end of the wick, slipped the mould over the wick and poured the hot tallow into the mould. When the tallow got cold we cut the knot off and slipped the candle out of the

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mould. Our candle moulds were the first ones brought into that part of the country, and all the neighbors borrowed them to mould their candles.

My father moved to Ute Creek, New Mexico, in 1867, when they struck placer gold there, and he put in a country store to supply the needs of the miners and the people who were rushing to the gold strike.

A man by the name of Stevens, I can't remember any other name as everyone called him "Steve", wheeled a wheelbarrow all the way from the State of Maine to Colorado. In this wheelbarrow he had his bed, his clothes and his provisions. He did not stay long in Colorado. He came on to Tiptonville and put in a toll road to Ute Creek and my father took care of the toll gate for him. They charged \$1.00 for a wagon, .50¢ for a horse and rider 4 and 25¢ for a person on foot. Mr. Stevens made a lot of money as there were lots of miners rushing to Ute Creek looking for gold.

When my brother and I were old enough to go to school we had to walk three miles. My mother was always so afraid of wild animals and Indians. We had a big bull dog who used to go with us to school. When he got tired waiting for us he would go home and when it was time for us to get home he would come to meet us. We lived down in a valley and had to go over a big hill and he would wait for us on top of this hill. We went to school at Ute Creek. The Indians were not so hostile as when we first came to New Mexico. It was the Apache and Ute Indians who gave so much trouble and sometimes the Kiowas and Cheyennes would slip in and make raids on the settlers.

My father was from Connecticutt originally and came to West Port, Mo., and married my mother there. She was Elizabeth Searcy. I am the last one left of the Searcy and Chittenden families. My brother Jap who was born after we came to New Mexico died in Gallup, New Mexico, in 1926.

Narrator: Mrs. Mary E Burleson, Aged 78 years.

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